

The environment of the educated and of the uneducated urban woman

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in between the street wall and the rooms in the old part of the house: As in the Sheikh's house at Topzawa there was an oil-cooker and cooking pits built in the floor. There was electric light in the house and plugs for an electric iron and electric fan. Work connected with the cooking of food was decentralized, also as at Topzawa, despite the slight extent of the house. The food was prepared in the courtyard and in the three-walled room, the smoking and baking was done in the cookhouse, either over the oil stove or cooking pits in the case of cooking, or over a fire with the help of a concave iron sheet, in the case of baking. Washing up was done with cold water at the big basin between the latrine and the bathroom. Clothes were also washed there in a large, flat vessel placed on the ground.

In the open hall was a set of clumsy wooden sofas with detachable, light-blue cotton covers. There was also a large table. All these were on occasion moved down to the courtyard. As an exception the table was used for meals, but as a rule it had bedclothes piled on it during the day. There was no steel furniture, but the guest room contained an upholstered set of furniture, polished wood sofa and easy chairs covered with plush, and a smoker's table. This set formed an interior and was not moved, but nevertheless guests used the floor of the guest room for sleeping. During the summer there was no furniture in the other rooms with the exception of a pair of low benches on which were heaped the winter blankets, grain sacks and such like. In addition there stood in the one room, quite alone, a large wardrobe of polished wood with a mirror in the door. It had originally been intended for clothes and had been fitted with shelves, but these had been taken out and replaced by bundles containing the clothing of the different members of the family. Stacked in the corners stood the blue, red and green metal chests, and on the walls were pegs and nails for the clothes of the family²⁹. There were no restrictions in regard to women's clothing hanging anywhere.

From the one corner of the courtyard, between the cookhouse and the bathroom, a small ladder of poplar trunks led up to the flat clay roof of the house, which was connected with all the roofs, though these varied in height, in that quarter of the town. During the time I was in Sulaimani the two iron bedsteads of the house were placed up here, and mattresses were rolled out for all the members of the family unless a dust storm forced them down into the courtyard. In that event the mattresses, but not the beds, were moved down. The sleeping space on the roof, that in summer time extended the inhabited area of the house in the same way as was the case at the Sheikh's house at Topzawa, was, on the side turned towards an adjacent mosque, closed off by mats³⁰, which were also seen on the other roofs of the town. However, these mats did not provide much private life for they did not form any kind of enclosed space around the sleeping places. A remarkable contrast was created between the common night quarters of all the town roofs, practically all on the same level, and the complete segregation of the house when descending the ladder. As was the case with the village aristocracy and among the peasants, the dining room was where the food trays were put down. In the urban environment I did not experience meals being eaten on the roof, as this always took place in the house itself, though in different rooms, the hall, or the courtyard. The guest room was only used when entertaining guests on special occasions.

Despite the beginnings of a furnishing scheme and the interior to be found in the guest room, the same flexibility existed in the placing of the other furniture and in the eating and sleeping pattern as was the case in the villages. This disturbed daily life as practiced by the two wives of the house,

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512 representatives of the "uneducated" urban women, as little as it did that of the women in the villages, but was difficult to reconcile with the form of life of the fully and half-grown schoolgoing children. In fact a continual conflict existed between the original, nomad type of life in the house, and the demand for fixed habits, fixed furnishing, necessary for the educated section of the family.

342
198 As an example of a new home intended solely for an educated urban woman we can take one created by a young newly-married couple, both folkschool teachers. It was a miniature edition of my interpreter's home: hall or loggia, with a room for the reception of guests behind. Entrance to the bedroom was gained from the loggia, and thence to the storeroom. In front of these rooms was a court with a cooking pit in the one corner and a pump in the centre. By the street wall there was a latrine in the form of a locked room. The bathroom in the neighbouring house could be used. There was no electric light. The guest room boasted steel furniture, and the loggia mattresses to sit on were also intended

[54] for sleeping on on the roof. The bedroom was furnished with a Baghdad suite consisting of a double-bed, wardrobe and dressing table made of polished wood. When this educated couple's home was arranged at the time of marriage there was furniture in all rooms. If this home be compared with others where similar furniture had previously been found, it appeared that in the course of time, as the family increases, the flexible mode of life results in the dissolution of regular furnishing. This had apparently been the case at the home of my interpreter, where the original marriage bed had been moved up to the roof for the changing use of the various members of the family, whilst the wardrobe, filled with bundles, was left in solitary majesty. When planning the wedding of the grown-up son in my interpreter's home, where the couple was to live in the home of the bridegroom's father as members of an extended family, it was decided that the room where the family wardrobe stood and which during the time I lived there had no other furniture, should be given to the young couple. The daughter-in-law would probably acquire a Baghdad bedroom suite as part of her bride wealth.

[59] As the young couple, after having been an independent family cell would, after the birth of the first child, divide—the woman entering the woman's world of the house, the man the man's world outside it—the furnishings would be included in the common, flexible, movable pattern.

[593] The only possible solution of the problem of housing so large a number of family members in a home with relatively so few rooms, is to use them in common both for meals and for sleeping. It



Fig. 31. (CY. figs. 24 and 30). Ground-plan of house for newly-married couple, Sulaimani. Scale 1:300.

a: central living room, *haya*; b: sleeping room; c: store room; d: cooking and baking facilities in courtyard; e: (himmah) +; f: latrine; g: guest room.

Woman's activities in the home

43

appeared more important than the private life of the individual or the married couple that a reception room for male guests should be maintained in such wise that they could come and go without being seen by the women of the house.

WOMAN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE HOME

The activities of Kurdiah women comprise the following eleven categories: Baking of bread, treatment of milk, making of tea, cooking, fetching water, collecting fuel, treatment of grain, washing up, washing and ironing of clothes, cleaning the house, and making beds. They rise at about 5 a.m., relax or sleep during the middle of the day, and go to bed between 11 and midnight.

Baking of bread. Kurdiah bread consists of circular pancakes, *ndn*, of the thinness of paper, about 50 cm. in diameter, crisp when new, so soft later that it almost resembles wash leather³¹. The dough, *hawir*, is prepared from wheat flour, *ard*, sifted through a round sieve, water, *dw*, and salt, *xwê*. It is kept in a sack or bag, *xîle-ddn*,³² of knotted or woven material (E. 2357). Yeast is not used, and when the dough is prepared it is immediately ready for use. It is kneaded in a large, flat, circular copper dish tinned on the inside, with an edge about 10 cm. high. The dough is loosened from the dish by the help of a flat iron spoon, (E. 2265) about 23 cm. long, the handle of which ends in a loop. The dough is formed by hand into lumps, *gurek*, about the size of a clenched fist, which are laid out, often on a plastic cloth, for later use. The forming of the dough is done in two ways; the one chosen depending, so far as I could discover, on whether the baking was to be done in a jar-shaped earth

Fig. 32. Baking. Dough sheet is placed upon baking pillow. Topzawa.

Fig. 33. Baking. Dough is rolled out upon baking table. Topzawa.



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HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO FOUR FEMALE ENVIRONMENTS

Village aristocracy. In Topzawa the baking of bread takes place about three times weekly in the home's earth oven. This is attended to by three women at a time, mother, daughter and servant girl, or mother, daughter and a neighbour, who in addition also did her own baking in order to utilize the oven's capacity.

Goats, sheep and cows are milked by mother and daughter so long as the cattle return home in the evening. When, in the summer, the sheep and goats are handed over to the care of the village shepherd, the servant girl goes out to the mountains twice a day, at about 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., with the other women of the village to meet the shepherd and his charges. *M&st* is made daily in the home. Butter is churned every morning. The churning sack is hung up on a beam in the cookhouse or on a beam

Fig. 38. Woman crouching before the fire. Topzawa.



Household activities in relation to the few female environments

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The ~~churning~~ sack is hung up on a beam in the cookhouse or on a beam in the wall just outside the way down to it. The ~~big~~ sack is hung up in the door opening; later in the summer the supply for drinking runs out and water is drunk. Sacks with milk for cheese cake are hung up out of doors. The daily production of butter is stored in the storeroom. Butter is only used for cooking. The making of tea is always done by the daughter of the house, but in exceptional cases a young male relative may assist. Extra supplies of meat, cucumber and vegetables may be brought in by the men or sent by the local bus from Sulaimani.

Cooking is performed by the daughter of the home, but the food is prepared by the mother. Mother and daughter go out into the mountains together to pluck vine leaves in the vineyards of the house, and go together into the kitchen garden in front of the house to fetch vegetables (Toprawa). The daughters-in-law of the house go to the fruit garden to pick figs (Serkan). Water is found within the precincts of the house (Toprawa, Sargala).

Water is fetched by the children or the servant girl. At Mirza Rustam it is fetched from the river by donkey and then emptied into petrol cans in the courtyard.

The collection of fuel in the mountains is performed by the maid servant of the house who has with her an axe with a crescent-shaped blade, and a donkey. Charcoal is fetched by men with donkeys (Toprawa). Washing-up is done by the servants. These can be either male (Sargala, Serkan) or female.

The washing of clothes is done by the women of the house assisted by the servants—the same applies to ironing. Cleaning and bed-making is performed by all the women of the house in association.

To sum up: the activities that take place within the area of the house and those in its immediate neighbourhood, that is to say the kitchen garden, the orchard, vineyard etc. are attended to by the adult women of the village aristocracy assisted by the children and servants available, the work being distributed as in Europe.

The activities taking place outside the precincts of the home, such as milking the sheep and goats in the care of the village shepherd, are attended to by the servants of the house.

The ordinary village milieu. The baking of bread in the earth oven is undertaken simultaneously by several women from different homes. The earth oven can be placed outside the house. At Mirza Rustam there was one on an open space between the houses. In Balkha and other places where iron sheets were used instead of ovens, baking was done at home by the individual housewife alone.

The treatment of milk. The women go out into the mountains or to the mulberry plantations twice during the day to meet the shepherd. In Balkha the women took turns in giving each other the due quantity of milk. Churning was done in each home, the churning sack being suspended from a frame outside the house.

The making of tea could either be undertaken by women or by men.

Water was fetched in clay jars, petrol tins and goatskins from common water-basins far from the houses by women. It could be a constant and troublesome affair as at Balkha, where 3-4 goatskins had to be transported from the valley up to the village, the necessary water supply for 4-5 persons, or as in Mirza Rustam when water in petrol tins must be fetched from the river over 800 paces from the village houses.

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Fig. 39. Village women go out in the mountains to meet shepherd twice a day. Topazawa.

462 Fuel is collected in the mountains by women with axes and carried home on the back. Cattle dung
512 is collected in the mountains, kneaded with straw and dried into cakes on the wall of the house.

234 The rinsing of rice takes place at the water basin from which water is fetched, often far from the
231 home. Wheaten grain is ground in the house of a neighbour who owns a quern.

291 Cooking and washing up is done at home, whilst the washing of clothes takes place at the spring
415 basin in small villages and at big, covered parochial basins in the larger ones, by all the women in
[296] association. The clothes are laid out to dry at the same place. Beds are made by all the women of the
[356] house working together. When the family slept on the roof the bedding remained there, but was rolled
[496] up during the day. An extra task at Balkha was the glazing of the roof with a mixture of clay and
chalk; this was done collectively at the various homes in turn. To sum up: Apart from the cooking of
food and bed making, a great part of the domestic activities take place outside the home and are
performed by the women of the village collectively. In Balkha the distribution of milk and the treat-
ment of the roofs were also collective.

Household activities in relation to the four female entitlements

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Educated and uneducated urban environment can be considered together.

Bread was obtained in three ways. In the home of my interpreter at Sulaimani it was baked at home on an iron sheet by the women of the house. Collective baking of a larger quantity, the dough being prepared by a woman who arrived at dawn, was undertaken in a neighbouring home with an earth oven that was lent for the day. The 4-5 women of the house, plus the woman who had prepared the dough, took part in this, three and three at a time, but none of the women in the house possessing the oven participated in the baking. The third possibility was to purchase ready-baked bread, sheets, of a thicker and coarser quality from the Sulaimani bakeries, which were equipped with earth ovens built into the walls. These were operated by men. [269] [252] [967] [512] [443]

The treatment of milk is not met with in this milieu. *Mâst* is delivered daily from outside. Snow to be put in *mâstâr* is fetched from the *zâb* by one of the lads, carried home on his head, rinsed under the pump, and placed in the pitcher. The annual consumption of butter—about 10 petrol cans full costing about £1 each—is bought in bulk in the form of clarified butter. Tea is made by the eldest wife. The accessories for tea are disintegrating: the primus stove has replaced the iron basin and samovar, the bucket the finger bowl. [242]

Cooking is done by the adult women, wives and daughters, in turn. *Kâhâb* is made specially by the husband⁷⁵ over a low charcoal basin. There is no fetching of water as good municipal water is laid on, with several taps. [352] [312]

When needed, *kâhâb* could be bought, and was, at the open food stalls in the city. Meat, vegetables and fruit were bought in the *zâb* by the husband and delivered by an errand-boy. Cooking was either done over the fire in the cooking pit or on the oil stove—in both cases by the women of the house. An extra task, unknown in the village milieu, was the cleaning of grain. Grain in large consignments is purchased from the peasants in August after the harvest and threshing. It is put into sacks stitched together, loaded onto a donkey, and brought by the vendor to the house where it is unloaded in the hall, washed by the women of the house, and carried up to the roof to dry on outspread sacks for several days. The grain is then poured down into the courtyard and cleaned by being cast from metal trays into the air, whereafter it is sifted by a half-blind grain cleaner woman summoned for the purpose. The discarded grain is submitted to a further cleaning and drying, and then all of it is sent to be ground. [443] [243]

Washing-up and cleaning are the tasks of the daughters of the house. Washing of clothes and ironing take place at home. Both are made by the wives and daughters jointly.

To sum up: Certain activities, such as the treatment of milk and the production of butter and cheese, the fetching of water and fuel, do not exist. The town provides the possibility of purchasing bread and prepared food. The remainder of the domestic activities are carried out jointly within one's own or somebody else's home. Grain, but not flour, is bought and further processed. There is no permanent staff of servants, but women can be obtained, if required, for things like the cleaning of grain and baking. I did not observe any mass of collective work between neighbours. [357] [476]

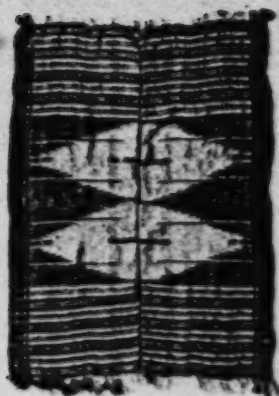
The daily prayers

Fig. 96.

Prayer rug of goat's wool in natural colours. (E. 2254). Toponawa.

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loose-hanging ends of their white head veil down over the head with the ends round their necks, so that the veil formed a hood which allowed only the face to be seen. If wearing shoes they stepped out of them, and with their bare feet trod on the hem of their long kirtle, thus hiding their feet. They then loosened their long, wedge-shaped sleeves that were either wound round their forearms or hanging down their backs, tied together at the ends, so that they fell to the ground over hands and fingers, which were thus also hidden by the costume. When these preparations were concluded, the woman adopted the first position of prayer and announced her intention of praising God, which constitutes the introduction to the prayer itself. She then raised her hands with the palms turned forwards within the arms of the kirtle until they were outside her ears and announced "God is great"—. She then lowered her hands and, with the right hand grasping the left wrist, recited the opening Sure of the Coran, followed by one or more passages from the holy book. She then bowed forwards from the hips with her hands on the knees, then went down on her knees to perform the double prostration of which the midday prayer comprises four sets, *ruk'a*, ending in the kneeling position whilst reciting the declaration of faith, the ritual greetings, and turning the head first to the left and then to the right. According to Juynboll⁶, the prayer can be divided into nine positions, the positions 3-8, that is to say six positions, constituting a *ruk'a*, whereas Gibb⁷ allows seven position to each *ruk'a*, as he includes the first standing posture and counts one standing position between, or as a beginning of, each *ruk'a*.

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The afternoon prayer, like the midday prayer with four *ruk'a*, was usually said on the clay roof about 6 p.m., shortly before sundown.

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On the other hand the sunset prayer with only three *ruk'a*, took place down in the three-walled central room at about 8 p.m., as did the evening prayer comprising four *ruk'a* at 9-10 p.m.